

STATEMENT BY IVAN ALLEN, JR.

MAYOR OF ATLANTA

JULY 26, 1963

MR. CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE SENATE

COMMERCE COMMITTEE.....

I AM HONORED TO APPEAR BEFORE YOUR
COMMITTEE.

AT THE BEGINNING... I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE
IT CLEAR THAT I FEEL QUALIFIED TO SPEAK ON THE
SUBJECT UNDER DISCUSSION... WHICH IS THE
ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION... ON WHAT I
HAVE LEARNED FROM PERSONAL EXPERIENCE... AND
OBSERVATION IN MY HOME CITY OF ATLANTA... GEORGIA.
AS PERCEPTIVE MEN OF WIDE EXPERIENCE... I FEEL
CONFIDENT THAT YOU WILL AGREE WITH ME THAT
THIS IS AS SERIOUS A BASIC PROBLEM IN THE NORTH...
EAST... AND WEST... AS IT IS IN THE SOUTH.

IT MUST BE DEFINED AS AN ALL-AMERICAN
PROBLEM... WHICH REQUIRES AN ALL-AMERICAN SOLUTION
BASED ON LOCAL THOUGHT... LOCAL ACTION... AND
LOCAL COOPERATION.

THE 500 THOUSAND PEOPLE WHO LIVE WITHIN
OUR CITY LIMITS CONSIST OF 300 THOUSAND WHITE
CITIZENS ... AND SLIGHTLY MORE THAN 200 THOUSAND
NEGRO CITIZENS. THAT MAKES THE POPULATION
OF ATLANTA SIXTY PERCENT WHITE..... FORTY PERCENT
NEGRO.

THAT SIXTY - FORTY PERCENTAGE EMPHASIZES
HOW ESSENTIAL IT IS FOR THE PEOPLE OF ATLANTA...
ON THEIR LOCAL LEVEL... TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM
OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN ORDER TO MAKE ATLANTA
A BETTER PLACE IN WHICH TO LIVE.

ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IS NO
FAR OFF PHILOSOPHICAL THEORY TO THE MORE THAN
ONE MILLION PEOPLE... WHO LIVE IN AND AROUND
ATLANTA. THE PROBLEM IS PART AND PARCEL OF
OUR DAILY LIVES. ITS SOLUTION MUST BE STUDIED
AND WORKED OUT ON OUR HOMEFRONT.

AS THE MAYOR OF THE SOUTHEAST'S
LARGEST CITY... I CAN SAY TO YOU... OUT OF FIRST HAND
EXPERIENCE... AND FIRST HAND KNOWLEDGE THAT
NOWHERE DOES THE PROBLEM OF ELIMINATING DISCRIMINATION
BETWEEN THE RACES... STRIKE SO CLOSELY HOME...
AS IT DOES TO THE LOCAL ELECTED PUBLIC OFFICIAL.
HE IS THE MAN WHO CANNOT PASS THE BUCK.

FROM THIS VIEWPOINT... I SPEAK OF THE
PROBLEM AS HAVING BEEN BROUGHT INTO SHARP FOCUS

BY DECISIONS OF THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES... AND THEN GENERALLY IGNORED BY THE PRESIDENTS... AND CONGRESSES OF THE UNITED STATES. LIKE A FOUNDLING BABY... THIS AWESOME PROBLEM HAS BEEN LEFT ON THE DOORSTEPS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS THROUGHOUT THE NATION.

NOW TO TAKE UP SPECIFICS. YOU GENTLEMEN INVITED ME TO TELL YOU HOW ATLANTA HAS ACHIEVED A CONSIDERABLE MEASURE OF COMPARATIVE SUCCESS IN DEALING WITH RACIAL DISCRIMINATION.

IT IS TRUE THAT ATLANTA HAS ACHIEVED SUCCESS IN ELIMINATING DISCRIMINATION IN AREAS WHERE SOME OTHER CITIES HAVE FAILED... BUT WE DO NOT BOAST OF OUR SUCCESS. INSTEAD OF BOASTING... WE SAY

WITH THE HUMILITY OF THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN REALITY
THAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED OUR MEASURE OF SUCCESS
ONLY BECAUSE WE LOOKED FACTS IN THE FACE AND
ACCEPTED THE SUPREME COURT'S DECISIONS AS
INEVITABLE... AND AS THE LAW OF OUR LAND. HAVING
EMBRACED REALISM IN GENERAL.... WE THEN SET OUT
TO SOLVE SPECIFIC PROBLEMS BY LOCAL COOPERATION
BETWEEN PEOPLE OF GOOD WILL AND GOOD SENSE
REPRESENTING BOTH RACES.

IN ATTACKING THE SPECIFIC PROBLEMS...
WE ACCEPTED THE BASIC TRUTH THAT THE SOLUTIONS
WHICH WE SOUGHT TO ACHIEVE IN EVERY INSTANCE...
GRANTED TO OUR NEGRO CITIZENS RIGHTS WHICH WHITE
AMERICAN CITIZENS... AND BUSINESSES PREVIOUSLY HAD
RESERVED TO THEMSELVES AS SPECIAL PRIVILEGES.

THESE SPECIAL PRIVILEGES LONG HAD BEEN
PROPPED UP BY A MULTITUDE OF LOCAL ORDINANCES
AND STATEWIDE LAWS WHICH HAD UPHELD RACIAL
SEGREGATION IN ALMOST EVERY CONCEIVABLE FORM.

IN ATLANTA WE HAD PLENTY OF THESE PROPS
OF PREJUDICE TO CONTEND WITH . . . WHEN WE SET OUT
TO SOLVE OUR SPECIFIC PROBLEMS OF DISCRIMINATION.
IN ATTACKING THESE PROBLEMS. . . . I WANT TO
EMPHASIZE THAT IN NOT ONE SINGLE INSTANCE HAVE
WE RETAINED. . . OR ENHANCED THE PRIVILEGES OF
SEGREGATION.

IT HAS BEEN A LONG. . . EXHAUSTING. . . AND
OFTEN DISCOURAGING PROCESS AND THE END IS FAR
FROM BEING IN SIGHT.

IN THE 1950's ATLANTA MADE A SIGNIFICANT
START ... WITH A SERIES OF REASONABLE ELIMINATIONS
OF DISCRIMINATION SUCH AS ... ON GOLF COURSES... AND
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION. WE BEGAN TO BECOME
SOMEWHAT CONDITIONED FOR MORE EXTENSIVE... AND
DEFINITIVE ACTION.. WHICH HAS BEEN TAKING PLACE
IN THE 1960's.

DURING THE PAST TWO AND A HALF YEARS...
ATLANTA HAS TAKEN THE FOLLOWING MAJOR STEPS TO
ELIMINATE RACIAL DISCRIMINATION:

1. IN SEPTEMBER, 1961, WE BEGAN REMOVING
DISCRIMINATION IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN RESPONSE TO A
COURT ORDER.

2. IN OCTOBER, 1961, LUNCH COUNTERS IN
DEPARTMENT AND VARIETY STORES ABOLISHED DISCRIMINATION
BY VOLUNTARY ACTION.

3. ON JANUARY 1, 1962 ATLANTA CITY FACILITIES WERE FREED FROM DISCRIMINATION BY VOLUNTARY ACTION OF MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS.

4. IN MARCH, 1962, DOWNTOWN AND ARTS THEATERS... OF THEIR OWN VOLITION... ABOLISHED DISCRIMINATION IN SEATING.

5. ON JANUARY 1, 1963.. THE CITY VOLUNTARILY ABOLISHED SEPARATE EMPLOYMENT LISTINGS FOR WHITES AND NEGROES.

6. IN MARCH, 1963, THE CITY EMPLOYED NEGRO FIREMEN. IT LONG AGO EMPLOYED NEGRO POLICEMEN.

7. IN MAY OF 1963, THE ATLANTA REAL ESTATE BOARD (WHITE)... AND THE EMPIRE REAL ESTATE BOARD (NEGRO)... ISSUED A STATEMENT OF

PURPOSES... CALLING FOR ETHICAL HANDLING OF REAL ESTATE TRANSACTIONS IN CONTROVERSIAL AREAS.

8. IN JUNE 1963.. THE CITY GOVERNMENT OPENED ALL MUNICIPAL SWIMMING POOLS ON A DESEGREGATED BASIS. THIS WAS VOLUNTARY ACTION TO COMPLY WITH A COURT ORDER.

9. ALSO, IN JUNE, 1963, EIGHTEEN HOTELS AND MOTELS,... REPRESENTING THE LEADING PLACES OF PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS IN THE CITY... VOLUNTARILY REMOVED ALL SEGREGATION FOR CONVENTIONS.

10. AGAIN IN JUNE, 1963... MORE THAN THIRTY OF THE CITY'S LEADING RESTAURANTS... OF THEIR OWN VOLITION... ABOLISHED SEGREGATION IN THEIR FACILITIES.

YOU CAN READILY SEE THAT ATLANTA'S STEPS HAVE BEEN TAKEN IN SOME INSTANCES IN COMPLIANCE

WITH COURT DECISIONS. . . . AND IN OTHER INSTANCES THE
STEPS HAVE BEEN VOLUNTARY PRIOR TO ANY COURT
ACTION. IN EACH INSTANCE. . . THE ACTION HAS
RESULTED IN WHITE CITIZENS RELINQUISHING SPECIAL
PRIVILEGES WHICH THEY HAD ENJOYED UNDER THE PRACTICES
OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION. EACH ACTION ALSO HAS
RESULTED IN THE NEGRO CITIZEN BEING GIVEN RIGHTS
WHICH ALL OTHERS PREVIOUSLY HAD ENJOYED. . . . AND
WHICH HE HAS BEEN DENIED.

AS I MENTIONED AT THE BEGINNING. . . ATLANTA
HAS ACHIEVED ONLY A MEASURE OF SUCCESS. I THINK
IT WOULD ASSIST YOU IN UNDERSTANDING THIS IF I
EXPLAINED HOW LIMITED SO FAR HAS BEEN THIS
TRANSITION FROM THE OLD SEGREGATED SOCIETY OF
GENERATIONS PAST. . . . AND ALSO HOW LIMITED SO FAR
HAS BEEN THE PARTICIPATION OF THE NEGRO CITIZENS.

SIGNIFICANT AS IS THE VOLUNTARY ELIMINATION
OF DISCRIMINATION IN OUR LEADING RESTAURANTS... IT
AFFECTS SO FAR ONLY A SMALL PERCENTAGE OF THE
HUNDREDS OF EATING PLACES IN OUR CITY.

AND PARTICIPATION BY NEGROES SO FAR HAS
BEEN VERY SLIGHT. FOR EXAMPLE... ONE OF ATLANTA'S
TOPMOST RESTAURANTS SERVED ONLY SIXTEEN OUT OF
ATLANTA'S 200 THOUSAND NEGRO CITIZENS DURING THE
FIRST WEEK OF FREEDOM FROM DISCRIMINATION.

THE PLAN FOR ELIMINATING DISCRIMINATION IN
HOTELS AS YET TAKES CARE ONLY OF CONVENTION
DELEGATES. ALTHOUGH PROMINENT NEGROES HAVE BEEN
ACCEPTED AS GUESTS IN SEVERAL ATLANTA HOTELS...
THE NEGRO CITIZENS... AS A WHOLE... SELDOM APPEAR
AT ATLANTA HOTELS.

UNDERLYING ALL THE EMOTIONS OF THE SITUATION. ...
IS THE MATTER OF ECONOMICS. IT SHOULD BE REMEMBERED
THAT THE RIGHT TO USE A FACILITY... DOES NOT MEAN
THAT IT WILL BE USED OR MISUSED BY ANY GROUP...
ESPECIALLY THE GROUPS IN THE LOWER ECONOMIC STATUS.

THE STATEMENTS I HAVE GIVEN YOU COVER
THE ACTUAL PROGRESS MADE BY ATLANTA TOWARD
TOTAL ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION.

NOW I WOULD LIKE TO SUBMIT MY PERSONAL
REASONS WHY I THINK ATLANTA HAS RESOLVED SOME
OF THESE PROBLEMS WHILE IN OTHER CITIES...
SOLUTIONS HAVE SEEMED IMPOSSIBLE AND STRIFE ... AND
CONFLICT HAVE RESULTED.

AS AN ILLUSTRATION... I WOULD LIKE TO
DESCRIBE A RECENT VISIT OF AN OFFICIAL DELEGATION
FROM A GREAT EASTERN CITY WHICH HAS A NEGRO

POPULATION OF OVER 600 THOUSAND CONSISTING OF
IN EXCESS OF TWENTY PERCENT OF ITS WHOLE POPULATION.

THE MEMBERS OF THIS DELEGATION AT FIRST
SIMPLY DID NOT UNDERSTAND AND WOULD HARDLY
BELIEVE THAT THE BUSINESS CIVIC AND POLITICAL
INTERESTS OF ATLANTA HAD INTENTLY CONCERNED
THEMSELVES WITH THE NEGRO POPULATION. I STILL
DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THEY ARE CONVINCED . . . THAT ALL OF
OUR CIVIC BODIES BACKED BY THE PUBLIC INTEREST
AND SUPPORTED BY THE CITY GOVERNMENT . . . HAVE
DAILY CONCEREND THEMSELVES WITH AN EFFORT TO
SOLVE OUR GRAVEST PROBLEM WHICH IS
RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR RACES. GENTLEMEN
ATLANTA HAS NOT SWEPT THIS QUESTION UNDER THE
RUG AT ANY POINT. STEP BY STEP SOMETIMES
UNDER COURT ORDER SOMETIMES VOLUNTARILY

MOVING AHEAD OF PRESSURES..... SOMETIMES ADROITLY.....

... AND MANY TIMES CLUMSILY..... WE HAVE TRIED TO

FIND A SOLUTION TO EACH SPECIFIC PROBLEM ... THROUGH

AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE AFFECTED WHITE

OWNERSHIP AND THE NEGRO LEADERSHIP.

TO DO THIS... WE HAVE NOT APPOINTED A HUGE

GENERAL BI-RACIAL COMMITTEE.... WHICH TOO OFTEN

MERELY BECOMES A BURIAL PLACE FOR UNSOLVED

PROBLEMS... BY CONTRAST... EACH TIME A SPECIFIC

PROBLEM HAS COME INTO FOCUS... WE HAVE APPOINTED

THE PEOPLE INVOLVED TO WORK OUT THE SOLUTION... THEATER

OWNERS TO WORK WITH THE TOP NEGRO LEADERS..... OR

HOTEL OWNERS TO WORK WITH THE TOP LEADERSHIP..... OR

CERTAIN RESTAURANT OWNERS WHO OF THEIR OWN VOLITION

DEALT WITH THE TOP NEGRO LEADERSHIP. BY DEVELOPING

THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION AND RESPECTABILITY...

WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO REACH AMICABLE SOLUTIONS.

ATLANTA IS THE WORLD'S CENTER OF NEGRO
HIGHER EDUCATION. THERE ARE SIX GREAT NEGRO
UNIVERSITIES... AND COLLEGES... LOCATED INSIDE
OUR CITY LIMITS. BECAUSE OF THIS... A GREAT NUMBER
OF INTELLIGENT... WELL-EDUCATED NEGRO CITIZENS
HAVE CHOSEN TO REMAIN IN OUR CITY. AS A RESULT
OF THEIR EDUCATION... THEY HAVE HAD THE ABILITY
TO DEVELOP A PROSPEROUS NEGRO BUSINESS COMMUNITY.
IN ATLANTA IT CONSISTS OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS
LIKE BANKS... BUILDING AND LOAN ASSOCIATIONS...
LIFE INSURANCE COMPANIES... CHAIN DRUG STORES...
REAL ESTATE DEALERS. IN FACT... THEY HAVE DEVELOPED
BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS... I BELIEVE... IN ALMOST
EVERY LINE OF ACKNOWLEDGED AMERICAN BUSINESS.

THERE ARE ALSO MANY NEGRO PROFESSIONAL MEN.

THEN THERE IS ANOTHER POWERFUL FACTOR
WORKING IN THE BEHALF OF GOOD RACIAL RELATIONS
IN OUR CITY. WE HAVE NEWS MEDIA... BOTH WHITE
AND NEGRO... WHOSE LEADERS STRONGLY BELIEVE AND
PUT INTO PRACTICE THE GREAT TRUTH THAT RESPONSIBILITY
OF THE PRESS .. (AND BY THIS I MEAN RADIO AND TELEVISION
AS WELL AS THE WRITTEN PRESS).. IS INSEPARABLE FROM
FREEDOM OF THE PRESS.

THE LEADERSHIP OF OUR WRITTEN... SPOKEN
AND TELEVISED NEWS MEDIA JOIN WITH THE BUSINESS
AND GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP... BOTH WHITE AND
NEGRO... IN WORKING TO SOLVE OUR PROBLEMS.

WE ARE FORTUNATE THAT WE HAVE ONE OF THE
WORLD FAMOUS EDITORIAL SPOKESMEN FOR REASON AND

MODERATION ON ONE OF OUR WHITE NEWSPAPERS...

ALONG WITH OTHER EDITORS AND MANY REPORTERS WHO
STRESS SIGNIFICANCE ... RATHER THAN SENSATION IN
THE REPORTING AND INTERPRETATION OF WHAT HAPPENS
IN OUR CITY.

AND WE ARE FORTUNATE IN HAVING A STRONG
NEGRO DAILY NEWSPAPER .. "THE ATLANTA DAILY WORLD"
AND A VIGOROUS NEGRO WEEKLY .. "THE ATLANTA
INQUIRER".

THE ATLANTA DAILY WORLD IS OWNED BY
A PROMINENT NEGRO FAMILY-- THE SCOTT FAMILY---
WHICH OWNS AND OPERATES A NUMBER OF OTHER NEWSPAPERS.

THE STURDY VOICES OF THE ATLANTA DAILY
WORLD AND THE ATLANTA INQUIRER.... BACKED BY THE
SUPPORT OF THE EDUCATIONAL.... BUSINESS.... AND
RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY.... REACH OUT TO OUR NEGRO

CITIZENS. THEY SPEAK TO THEM WITH FACTUAL
INFORMATION UPON WHICH THEY CAN RELY. THEY
EXPRESS OPINIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS IN WHICH THEY
CAN HAVE FAITH.

AS I SEE IT... OUR NEGRO LEADERSHIP IN
ATLANTA IS RESPONSIBLE AND CONSTRUCTIVE. I
AM SURE THAT OUR NEGRO LEADERSHIP IS AS DESIROUS
OF OBTAINING ADDITIONAL CIVIC AND ECONOMIC...
AND PERSONAL RIGHTS... AS IS ANY AMERICAN CITIZEN.
BUT BY CONSTRUCTIVE... I MEAN TO DEFINE ATLANTA'S
NEGRO LEADERSHIP AS BEING REALISTIC -- AS RECOGNIZING
THAT IT IS MORE IMPORTANT TO OBTAIN THE RIGHTS
THEY SEEK THAN IT IS TO STIR UP DEMONSTRATIONS,
SO IT IS TO THE CONSTRUCTIVE MEANS... BY WHICH
THESE RIGHTS CAN BE OBTAINED THAT OUR NEGRO LEADERS
CONSTANTLY ADDRESS THEMSELVES. THEY ARE

INTERESTED IN RESULTS INSTEAD OF RHETORIC. THEY
REACH FOR LASTING GOALS INSTEAD OF GRABBING FOR
MOMENTARY PUBLICITY. THEY ARE REALISTS...
NOT RABBLE ROUSERS. ALONG WITH INTEGRATION...
THEY WANT INTEGRITY.

I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT ANY SINCERE AMERICAN
CITIZEN DESIRES TO SEE THE RIGHTS OF PRIVATE
BUSINESS RESTRICTED BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT
UNLESS SUCH RESTRICTION IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY
FOR THE WELFARE OF THE PEOPLE OF THIS COUNTRY.

ON THE OTHER HAND... FOLLOWING THE LINE
OF THOUGHT OF THE DECISIONS OF THE FEDERAL COURTS
IN THE PAST FIFTEEN YEARS... I AM NOT CONVINCED
THAT CURRENT RULINGS OF THE COURTS... WOULD GRANT
TO AMERICAN BUSINESS THE PRIVILEGE OF DISCRIMINATION
BY RACE IN THE SELECTION OF ITS CUSTOMERS.

HERE AGAIN WE GET INTO THE AREA OF WHAT IS RIGHT AND WHAT IS BEST FOR THE PEOPLE OF THIS COUNTRY. IF THE PRIVILEGE OF SELECTION BASED ON RACE AND COLOR... SHOULD BE GRANTED... THEN WOULD WE BE GIVING TO BUSINESS THE RIGHT TO SET UP A SEGREGATED ECONOMY?..... AND IF SO... HOW FAST WOULD THIS RIGHT BE UTILIZED BY THE NATION'S PEOPLE?..... AND HOW SOON WOULD WE AGAIN BE GOING THROUGH THE OLD TURMOIL OF RIOTS.... STRIFE... DEMONSTRATIONS... BOYCOTTS... PICKETING?

ARE WE GOING TO SAY THAT IT IS ALL RIGHT FOR THE NEGRO CITIZEN TO GO INTO THE BANK ON MAIN STREET... AND TO DEPOSIT HIS EARNINGS... OR BORROW MONEY... THEN TO GO TO DEPARTMENT STORES TO BUY WHAT HE NEEDS... TO GO TO THE SUPERMARKET TO PURCHASE FOOD FOR HIS FAMILY... AND SO ON ALONG

MAIN STREET UNTIL HE COMES TO A RESTAURANT OR A
HOTEL. IN ALL THESE OTHER BUSINESS PLACES... HE
IS TREATED JUST LIKE ANY OTHER CUSTOMER. BUT
WHEN HE COMES TO THE RESTAURANT OR THE HOTEL...
ARE WE GOING TO SAY THAT IT IS RIGHT AND LEGAL ...
FOR THE OPERATORS OF THESE BUSINESSES... MERELY AS
A MATTER OF CONVENIENCE... TO INSIST THAT THE NEGRO'S
CITIZENSHIP BE CHANGED ... AND THAT... AS A SECOND
CLASS CITIZEN... HE IS TO BE REFUSED SERVICE?
I SUBMIT THAT IT IS NOT RIGHT TO ALLOW AN AMERICAN'S
CITIZENSHIP TO BE CHANGED MERELY AS A MATTER OF
CONVENIENCE.

IF THE CONGRESS SHOULD FAIL TO CLARIFY
THE ISSUE AT THE PRESENT TIME... THEN BY INFERENCE
IT WOULD BE SAYING THAT YOU COULD BEGIN DISCRIMINATION
UNDER THE GUISE OF PRIVATE BUSINESS. I DO NOT BELIEVE

THAT THIS IS WHAT THE SUPREME COURT HAS INTENDED WITH ITS DECISIONS. I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THIS IS THE INTENT OF CONGRESS OR THE PEOPLE OF THIS COUNTRY.

I AM NOT A LAWYER.. SENATORS. I AM NOT SURE I CLEARLY UNDERSTAND ALL OF THE TESTIMONY INVOLVING VARIOUS AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION AND THE COMMERCE CLAUSE WHICH HAS BEEN GIVEN TO THIS COMMITTEE. I HAVE A FUNDAMENTAL RESPECT FOR THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES. UNDER THIS CONSTITUTION... WE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN ABLE TO DO WHAT IS BEST FOR ALL OF THE PEOPLE OF THIS COUNTRY. I BEG OF YOU... NOT TO LET THIS ISSUE OF DISCRIMINATION DROWN IN LEGALISTIC WATERS. I AM FIRMLY CONVINCED THAT THE SUPREME COURT INSISTS THAT THE SAME FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS MUST BE HELD BY EVERY AMERICAN CITIZEN.

ATLANTA IS A CASE THAT PROVES THAT THE
PROBLEM OF DISCRIMINATION CAN BE SOLVED TO SOME
EXTENT..... AND I USE THIS "SOME EXTENT".....
CAUTIOUSLY... AS WE CERTAINLY HAVE NOT SOLVED
ALL OF THE PROBLEMS.... BUT WE HAVE MET THEM IN
A NUMBER OF AREAS. THIS CAN BE DONE LOCALLY...
VOLUNTARILY.... AND BY PRIVATE BUSINESS ITSELF!

ON THE OTHER HAND... THERE ARE HUNDREDS
OF COMMUNITIES AND CITIES... CERTAINLY THROUGHOUT
THE NATION THAT HAVE NOT EVER ADDRESSED THEMSELVES
TO THE ISSUE. WHEREAS... OTHERS HAVE FLAGRANTLY
IGNORED THE DEMAND.... AND TODAY... STAND IN ALL
DEFIANCE TO ANY CHANGE.

THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES IS NOW
CONFRONTED WITH A GRAVE DECISION. SHALL YOU PASS
A PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION BILL THAT FORCES THIS

ISSUE? OR... SHALL YOU CREATE ANOTHER ROUND OF
DISPUTES OVER SEGREGATION BY REFUSING TO PASS SUCH
LEGISLATION?

SURELY... THE CONGRESS REALIZES THAT AFTER
HAVING FAILED TO TAKE ANY DEFINITE ACTION ON THIS
SUBJECT IN THE LAST TEN YEARS... TO FAIL TO PASS
THIS BILL WOULD AMOUNT TO AN ENDORSEMENT OF PRIVATE
BUSINESS SETTING UP AN ENTIRELY NEW STATUS OF
DISCRIMINATION THROUGHOUT THE NATION. CITIES LIKE
ATLANTA MIGHT SLIP BACKWARDS. HOTELS AND
RESTAURANTS THAT HAVE ALREADY TAKEN THIS ISSUE
UPON THEMSELVES... AND OPENED THEIR DOORS MIGHT
FIND IT CONVENIENT TO GO BACK TO THE OLD STATUS.
FAILURE BY CONGRESS TO TAKE DEFINITE ACTION AT THIS
TIME IS BY INFERENCE AN ENDORSEMENT OF THE RIGHT
OF PRIVATE BUSINESS TO PRACTICE RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

AND... IN MY OPINION.. WOULD START THE SAME OLD
ROUND OF SQUABBLES AND DEMONSTRATIONS THAT WE
HAVE HAD IN THE PAST.

GENTLEMEN... IF I HAD YOUR PROBLEM ,

ARMED WITH THE LOCAL EXPERIENCE I HAVE HAD... I
WOULD PASS A PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION BILL. SUCH
A BILL... HOWEVER.. SHOULD PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY
FOR EACH LOCAL GOVERNMENT FIRST TO MEET THIS
PROBLEM AND ATTEMPT TO SOLVE IT ON A LOCAL..
VOLUNTARY BASIS.. WITH EACH BUSINESS MAKING ITS
OWN DECISION. I REALIZE THAT IT IS QUITE
EASY TO ASK YOU TO GIVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO EACH
BUSINESS MAN IN EACH CITY TO MAKE HIS DECISION AND
ACCOMPLISH SUCH AN OBJECTIVE... BUT IT IS EXTREMELY
DIFFICULT TO LEGISLATE SUCH A PROBLEM.

WHAT I AM TRYING TO SAY IS THAT THE PUPIL
PLACEMENT PLAN... WHICH HAS BEEN WIDELY USED IN
THE SOUTH. . PROVIDED A TIME TABLE APPROVED BY THE
FEDERAL COURTS WHICH HELPED IN GETTING OVER
THE TROUBLED WATER OF ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION
IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT CITIES
WORKING WITH PRIVATE BUSINESS INSTITUTIONS COULD
NOW MOVE INTO THE SAME AREA AND THAT THE FEDERAL
GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION SHOULD BE BASED ON THE
IDEA THAT THOSE BUSINESSES HAVE A REASONABLE TIME
TO ACCOMPLISH SUCH AN ACT.

I THINK A PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION LAW NOW
SHOULD STAND ONLY AS THE LAST RESORT TO ASSURE THAT
DISCRIMINATION IS ELIMINATED... BUT THAT SUCH A
LAW WOULD GRANT A REASONABLE TIME FOR CITIES AND
BUSINESSES TO CARRY OUT THIS FUNCTION BEFORE FEDERAL

INTERVENTION.

IT MIGHT EVEN BE NECESSARY THAT THE TIME
FACTOR BE MADE MORE LENIENT IN FAVOR OF SMALLER
CITIES AND COMMUNITIES... FOR WE ALL KNOW
THAT LARGE METROPOLITAN AREAS HAVE THE CAPABILITY
OF ADJUSTING TO CHANGES MORE RAPIDLY THAN SMALLER
COMMUNITIES.

PERHAPS.. THIS TOO... SHOULD BE GIVEN
CONSIDERATION IN YOUR LEGISLATION. BUT THE POINT
I WANT TO EMPHASIZE AGAIN IS THAT NOW IS THE TIME
FOR LEGISLATIVE ACTION. WE CANNOT DODGE THE
ISSUE. WE CANNOT LOOK BACK OVER OUR SHOULDERS
OR TURN THE CLOCK BACK TO THE 1860'S. WE MUST
TAKE ACTION NOW TO ASSURE A GREATER FUTURE FOR
OUR CITIZENS AND OUR COUNTRY.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO THE ABOLISHMENT OF
SLAVERY WON THE UNITED STATES THE ACCLAIM OF
THE WHOLE WORLD WHEN IT MADE EVERY AMERICAN
FREE IN THEORY.

NOW THE ELIMINATION OF SEGREGATION
WHICH IS SLAVERY'S STEPCHILD... IS A CHALLENGE
TO ALL OF US TO MAKE EVERY AMERICAN FREE IN FACT
AS WELL AS IN THEORY... AND AGAIN TO ESTABLISH
OUR NATION AS THE TRUE CHAMPION OF THE FREE
WORLD.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE
... I WANT TO THANK YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY OF
TELLING YOU ABOUT ATLANTA'S EFFORTS TO PROVIDE
EQUALITY OF CITIZENSHIP TO ALL WITHIN ITS BORDERS.